

# The Mallet

The monthly journal of Lodge Union and Crown No.307



September 2021

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*The Monthly Journal of Lodge Union & Crown, No.307*

No. 446



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Well that's us back in harness as a Lodge after 18 long months idle due to the difficulties caused by the Coronavirus Pandemic and the virtual closedown of many aspects of society as a result. All Lodges within the Scottish Craft followed the repeated guidance issued by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and kept their doors closed to any organised Masonic activities. It was difficult for everyone, and we as Freemasons, and our Mother Lodges in particular found it near impossible to maintain an even keel throughout the troubled period as it seemed to stretch on for ever.

We new it would be difficult to coax the Brethren back to their meetings after the horrendous statistics which affected each and everyone of us. We all knew someone would lost a family member, and certainly we all knew several who found themselves struck down by the infection who knew no boundaries, and was not selective in who suffered. Nevertheless, the Lodge thought long and hard and decided to plan exactly how we would resume our Masonic activities, as safely as possible for all concerned, with as many as felt confident enough to venture out socially to attend a Lodge Meeting.

Whilst the numbers coming forward to our two Regular Meetings so far, are not as high as we would like, you must take in to consideration that many of our Brethren unfortunately find themselves in groups who are still vulnerable to infection. We are trying to do all we can to allow a safe environment at our meetings, and the harmonies that follows, and that and some gentle persuasion will hopefully get our Brethren back eventually. If you know of someone who is reluctant to return, or nervous at attending a gathering, please do all you can to ease their fears and ensure them that if the correct steps are taken and adequate precautions observed, all will be well.

We are relaxed about conferring degrees at this early stage, and have adopted a careful approach to our meetings. AS things continue to approve, this will change and hopefully before too soon, we'll be back to normal in the Lodge.

**Stay Safe Brethren.**



Lodge Union & Crown

No. 307

*Dear Sir & Brother,*

*The Right Worshipful Master, Bro Ronald Angus MacIsaac cordially requests your attendance at the forthcoming Meetings of the Lodge to be held within the Masonic Temple, Cochrane Street, Barrhead on :*

***Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021***

*Business : Minutes & Correspondence etc.*

***Illustrated Talk***

*by Brother Robert Scott W.S.W.*

*Harmony*

***Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021***

*Business : Minutes & Correspondence etc.*

***Annual General Meeting of the Lodge***

*Nomination & Election of Office-bearers and Committees*

*Harmony*

*Yours faithfully & fraternally*

*David McArthur P.M., Secretary*

# Regular Meetings

At the Regular Meeting of the Lodge held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September, the RWM, Bro Ronnie Maclsaac, welcomed all the brethren to the first meeting of Lodge Union & Crown, following the 18 month period of the COVID19 pandemic. It was a short Business Meeting, followed by a celebratory dinner, courtesy of the Lodge. It was good to see a fine turnout of our Brethren, considering the difficult circumstances we all found ourselves in. All the Office-bearers and Brethren observed the government protocols and wore a face covering throughout, whilst on their feet to ensure that all was done to prevent further infections spreading.

Just before the business ended, the R.W.M. called Bro Robert Campbell Ritchie PM No.1219 to the West and asked if he would accept Honorary Membership of Lodge Union & Crown. A startled Bro Campbell stepped forward to the altar, and thereafter recited his obligation, before being presented to the assembled Brethren who gave him a thunderous applause before he sat down. This is an honour which is only given on rare occasions, and also only to Brethren who have attained a particularly high standard in the eyes of the Brethren of 307.

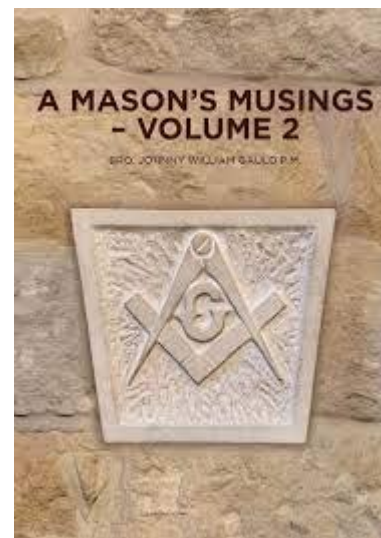
Afterwards at the Lodge Harmony, the Brethren were thoroughly entertained, again courtesy of the Lodge, by Bro John McKelvie, a retired Police Superintendent, who had a fine line in patter which brought smiles to the Brethren's faces.

**Opened : 7.30pm**

**Lodge Closed : 8,12pm**

**Attendance : 52**

At the Regular Meeting of the Lodge on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September, 10 Brethren of the Lodge took part, in a new style of 'Dramatisation' for Union & Crown, utilising a good number of poetic works penned by Bro Johnny Gauld P.M. and published by him in recent times in his two volumes of 'A Mason's Musings'.



The lights were dimmed, and Bro Johnny set the scene before each of the Brethren involved stood up and recited one of the poems, all of which had a Masonic theme. Bro Johnny added a small item of thought between each speaker, who then gathered round a campfire before Bro Johnny rounded the dramatization off with a powerful finale. This was greatly appreciated by all in attendance, especially the handful of visitors.

**Opened : 7-30 pm**

**Lodge Closed : 8.36 pm**

**Attendance : 37**

# 100 CLUB

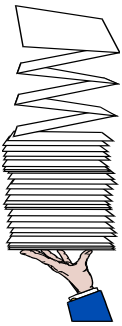
The fortunate winners of our cash prizes were :

**1<sup>st</sup> September**      £20 : **Bro Craig Allison**      £10 : **Bro Alan Davidson**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September**      £20 : **Bro Donald Cook PM**      £10 : **Bro Iain Nicol**

Bro George McGrandles P.M., has started taking names for next year, which will commence immediately after our Annual Installation in November.

The annual fee is still very good value at £10, & anyone interested should see Bro George, our Acting Treasurer.

## Paper Appeal



As ever, we are still looking for that essential commodity – PAPER.

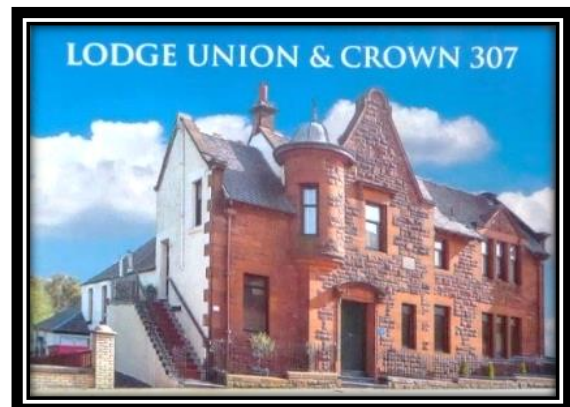
As many of our readers will know we make regular appeals for A4 size, 80g/m<sup>2</sup> paper, preferably white but any colour will do. Without sufficient stocks, we simply cannot print enough copies of our journal to satisfy our wide-ranging readership. So if you have the odd ream lying about just let us know and we'll even arrange to have it picked-up if necessary.

In addition, we also need 160g/m<sup>2</sup> card for various tasks within the Lodge..

## Lodge Postcards

Unique colour postcards of our Temple are still available for sale at the bargain price of £1-00 each from Bro Jim Miller PM (☎ 0141 881 4006) [jimmiller307@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jimmiller307@hotmail.co.uk)

All proceeds will go to The Lodge Charity Fund, with an annual donation being made to a local charity each year at our Anniversary Dinner in February.



# BITS & PIECES

- Congratulations to Bro Ronnie Maclsaac who turned 60 in the last few weeks..
- Bro Jim Renfrew PM and his wife Anne have just become Grandparents following the recent birth of a granddaughter. His daughter Leanne and baby Callie are both doing well.
- The 'Telephone Tree' operated during lockdown worked well and was appreciated by the Brethren, many of whom were housebound and possibly would not have spoken to anyone otherwise.
- Congratulations to Bro Johnny Gauld PM and his lovely wife Fiona who recently celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.
- It was sad to note that the names of 15 Brethren was read out at the first meeting back, having passed away during the COVID lockdown.
- A bonus of our return to regular meetings is that the Brethren are getting a chance to properly see all the refurbishment carried out during the pandemic. If there's a better Temple in Scotland, we haven't see it yet !
- On the subject of the refurbishment, the Brethren of the 'Wednesday Sausage Club' are to be congratulated, It was through their generosity that most the work completed was financed.
- It was great to see Bob Smillie attending the recent Lodge meeting. Bob travelled down from the Trossachs where he now lives.
- The Lodge WiFi has been further enhanced and anyone interested in using it should see Bro David McArthur our worthy Secretary who will provide them with the password.
- Well done to our Almoner Bro Alan Bernard PM who has work extremely well, in difficult circumstances over the past 18 months.
- Bro Adam G Watson passed us on a short complimentary email from his Bro Jim in Canada – *"Adam, thanks for the copy of "The Mallet" - it's a damned good read. It reads as good as a professional magazine"* We thank Bro Jim for his kind comments.
- It was pleasing to see £60 donated to the Lodge by Bro Johnny Gauld PM from the sale of his two volumes of Masonic poetry.
- We gather from Bro Lawrence Webb that the 'Christmas Dance' will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December. Tickets will be available shortly.
- Sorry to learn that Bro Ian Blair and his wife Mary had to cancel their holiday in exotic places when both of them were struck down with COVID19 just before departure.
- It was pleasing to see Bro Campbell Ritchie, our latest Honorary Member hand in a Bottle of Whisky to the Lodge in appreciation of the honour bestowed upon him.
- On a similar note, grateful thanks to Bro Willie Fleming, the retiring R.W.M. of Lodge Randolph, who also donated a fine bottle of Chivas Regal 21 year old to thank the Lodge for all the support and assistance he received from 307 during his 'extended term' as R.W.M. of his adopted Lodge. We gather that Bro Ronnie Maclsaac R.W.M. intends to raffle this for a worthy cause in the coming weeks.

# Famous Freemasons

*(This month we read of the world famous magician, vaudeville star and escapologist)*

## Bro Harry Houdini (1874-1926)

Born Erich Weiss, Harry Houdini was a world famous escape artist and trapeze performer, as well as the inventor of the diving suit, and the first successful aviator in Australia.

Fascinated with magic from a young age, Harry Houdini began performing and drew attention for his daring feats of escape.

He was born Erich Weisz on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1874, in Budapest, Hungary. One of seven children born to a Jewish rabbi and his wife, Weisz moved with his family as a child to Appleton, Wisconsin, where he later claimed he was born. When he was 13, Weisz moved with his father to New York City, taking on odd jobs and living in a boarding house before the rest of the family joined them. It was there that he became interested in trapeze arts.

In 1894, Weisz launched his career as a professional magician and renamed himself Harry Houdini, the first name being a derivative of his childhood nickname, "Ehrie," and the last an homage to the great French magician Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin. Though his magic met with little success, he soon drew attention for his feats of escape using handcuffs. In 1893, he married fellow performer Wilhelmina Beatrice Rahner, who would serve as Houdini's lifelong stage assistant under the name Beatrice "Bess" Houdini

In 1899, Houdini's act caught the attention of Martin Beck, an entertainment manager who soon got him booked at some of the best vaudeville venues in the country, followed by a tour of Europe. Houdini's feats would involve the local police, who would strip search him, place him in shackles and lock him in their jails. The show was a huge sensation, and he soon became the highest-paid performer in American vaudeville.

Houdini continued his act in the United States in the early 1900s, constantly upping the ante from handcuffs and straightjackets to locked, water-filled tanks and nailed packing crates. He was able to escape because of both his uncanny strength and his equally uncanny ability to pick locks. In 1912, his act reached its pinnacle, with the Chinese Water Torture Cell, which would be the hallmark of his career. In it, Houdini was suspended by his feet and lowered upside-down in a locked glass cabinet filled with water, requiring him to hold his breath for more than three minutes to escape. The performance was so daring and such a crowd-pleaser that it remained in his act until his death in 1926.



Harry Houdini's grand illusions and daring, spectacular escape acts made him one of the most famous magicians of all time.

Houdini's wealth allowed him to indulge in other passions, such as aviation and film. He purchased his first plane in 1909 and set out to become the first person to man a controlled power flight over Australia in 1910. While he did it after a few failed attempts, it later was revealed that Houdini was likely beaten to the punch by just a few months by a Capt. Colin Defries, who made a short flight in December 1909.

Houdini also launched a movie career, releasing his first film in 1901, *Merveilleux Exploits du Célèbre Houdini Paris*, which documented his escapes. He starred in several subsequent films, including *The Master Mystery*, *The Grim Game* and *Terror Island*. In New York, he started his own production company, Houdini Picture Corporation, and a film lab called The Film Development Corporation, but neither was a success. In 1923, Houdini became president of Martinka & Co., America's oldest magic company.

Harry Houdini was initiated in St. Cecile Lodge No. 568, in New York – 'The Lodge of the Arts' on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1923. He was passed later that same month, before being raised on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1923.

As president of the Society of American Magicians, Houdini was a vigorous campaigner against fraudulent psychic mediums. Most notably, he debunked renowned medium Mina Crandon, better known as Margery. This act turned him against former friend and fellow Freemason Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who believed deeply in spiritualism and Margery's sight.



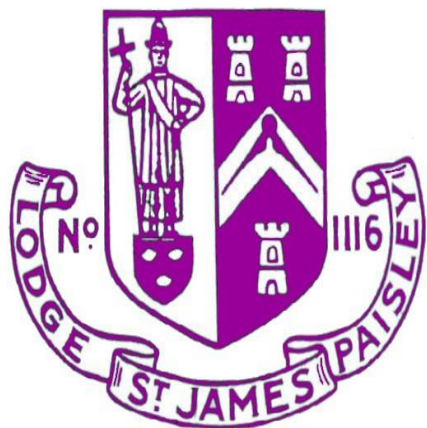
Though there are mixed reports as to the cause of Houdini's death, it is certain that he suffered from acute appendicitis. Whether his demise was caused by a McGill University student who was testing his will by punching him in the stomach (with permission) or by poison from a band of angry Spiritualists is unknown. What is known is that he died of peritonitis from a ruptured appendix on October 31, 1926, at the age of 52, in Detroit, Michigan.

After his death, Houdini's props and effects were used by his brother Theodore Hardeen, who eventually sold them to the magician and collector Sidney H. Radner. Much of the collection could be seen at the Houdini Museum in Appleton, Wisconsin, until Radner auctioned it off in 2004. Most of the prized pieces, including the Water Torture Cell, went to magician David Copperfield



*(We continue our series of articles which trace the history of local Lodges. This month we look at One of our Paisley neighbours)*

## Lodge Paisley St James, No.1116



On the 17th January 1913 a meeting was held at the Masonic Temple in the High Street, Paisley to form Lodge Paisley St. James.

The meeting was convened by Brother James Warnock PM of Lodge No 129 and after due deliberation a petition to grant a Charter to Lodge Paisley St. James was forwarded to Grand Lodge under the signatories of: Bro James Warnock Lodge 129, Bro James Campbell Lodge 370, Bro John Williamson, Bro John Jamieson, Bro Walter Maxwell, Bro Samuel McGill, Bro William Lyle, Bro Robert Gardiner, Bro Thomas Flett, Bro Robert Shaw, Bro William Campbell Bro Matthew Jamieson, Bro James Walker and Bro Claude Hannah.

The Charter to constitute Lodge Paisley St. James was granted on the 1st May 1913 and the Number 1116, was given to the Lodge by the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The petitioning brethren became the founding members of the Lodge, and elected Bro James Campbell as the first Right Worshipful Master. Bro James Warnock a jeweller in the town presented the Lodge with the Chains of Office and Jewels for the Master and Wardens.

The Lodge met in the Masonic Temple in the High Street until 1947 when it moved premises to the Liberal Club Halls. In 1957 the opportunity was taken to move to self-contained premises in Maxwellton Road where the Lodge continues to meet regularly today.

The 75th Anniversary was greatly affected by the events of September 1987, when the full Master's Regalia was stolen. Thankfully the regalia was soon replaced, and a local Jeweller - Stephen Butler was commissioned to make a replica of the Master's Chain and Jewel.

The events celebrated were twofold. The re-consecration of the Lodge was the main part of the Ceremony, coupled with the new chain and jewel being consecrated and presented to the Right Worshipful Master. The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East carried out the full Ceremonial Work. The second part of that day was a celebration of the work of the founding members of the Lodge and 75 years of prosperity in Lodge Paisley St. James.

It was also a milestone on the way to our Centenary and just as our Founders brought in the rituals and tradition of their Mother Lodges which become the foundation stones of our Masonic teaching and ritual to carry forward into the future.

The event of Lodge Paisley St. James mirrors the history of Paisley and our Founders had the foresight to choose a crest, which is delivered, from the Great Seal of Paisley





Abbey. The Abbey Crest portrays St. James on the obverse of the Great Seal and it is this figure, which gives the Lodge its distinctive Crest.

It is therefore our task to further maintain and enhance Masonic teaching, learning and brotherhood, which has been faithfully tended for over 90 years and ensure that it continues to burn brightly for our Brethren through future years guiding them in their path from darkness to light.

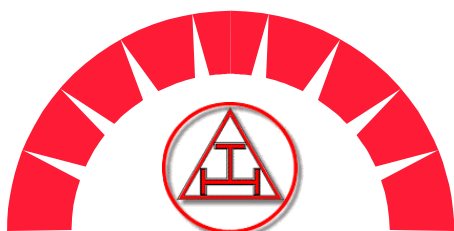
Meetings are held in the Masonic Temple, 68 Maxwellton Road, Paisley PA1 2RD, at 7.30pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, from October through to May.



## Dates for your Diary

- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October** Regular Meeting of the Lodge where an 'Illustrated Talk' will be given by Bro Robert Scott W.S.W.
- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October** Management Committee Meeting at 7-30pm.
- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October** Regular Meeting of the Lodge where the Lodge will hold its Annual General Meeting, and election of Office-bearers.

*In addition to the above (COVID Restrictions allowing) the R.W.M. may be involved in unofficial visits to Sister Lodges, details of which can be obtained by contacting any senior Office-bearer who will be only too pleased to take you along with them)*



**Rockmount R.A.C. No.367**

The Companions of Rockmount met at an informal meeting on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the way forward post COVID. There was a good attendance of Companions and the meeting was chaired by the ME First Principal MEC Harry Lloyd

It was decided to hold another committee meeting on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October to further discuss the arrangements for the forthcoming AGM of the Chapter on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November, followed by the Annual Installation of the Chapter on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm

# FLASHBACK

## Some Snippets from "The Mallet" of 37 Years Ago

No. 246

September 2001

### Regular Meetings

At the Regular Meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September, the following Candidate :

#### JOHN HEARNS

was raised to the high and sublime degree of a M.M. by the some of the more experienced members of the Lodge Instruction Class, in what was a fine rendition of the Third Degree.

Lodge Opened : 7-30pm

Lodge Closed : 9-44pm

Attendance : 71



At the Regular Meeting on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September, the following Candidate :

#### ALEXANDER JOHNSTON

was initiated in to the mysteries and privileges of our order by a deputation of Office-bearers and Brethren from our Sister Lodge, Craigielea, No.1218 led by their own Right Worshipful Master, Bro David Dewhurst, in what was a good degree, greatly appreciated by those in attendance.

Lodge Opened : 7-31pm

Lodge Closed : 9-50pm

Attendance : 73



### 100 CLUB

The fortunate winners of our cash prizes for the month of September, were as follows :

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Sept    £10 : Bro Jim Renfrew PM                      £5 : Bro David Campbell

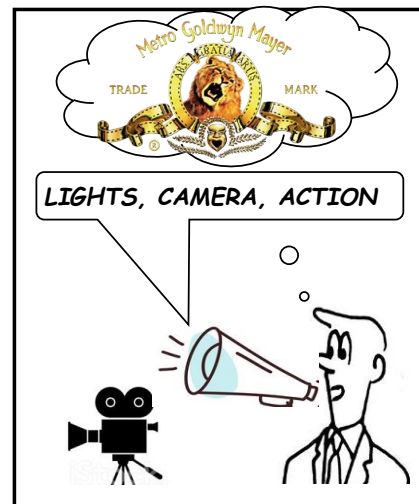
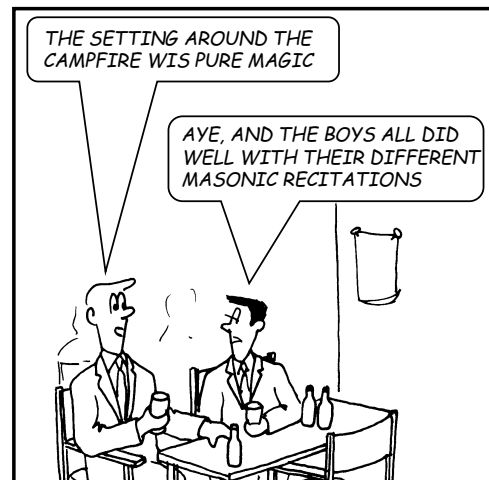
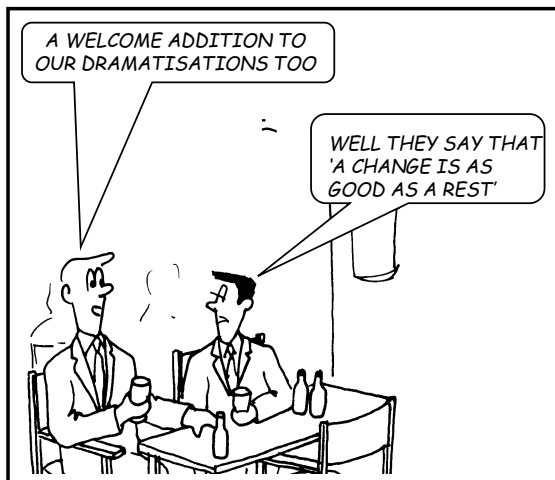
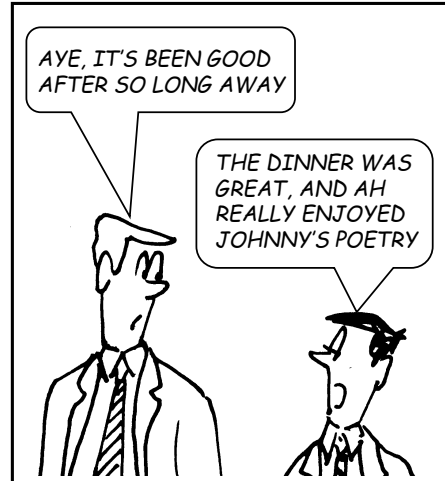
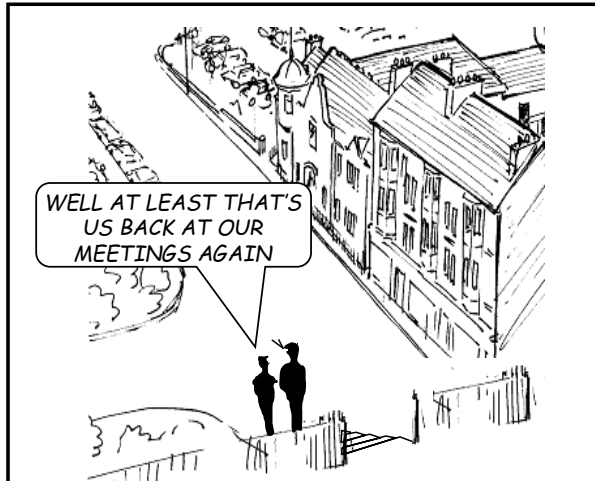
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> Sept    £10 : Bro Donnie Connell PM 1218                      £5 : Bro Donald Cook



### Spring Lodge, No.1174

As many will undoubtedly be well aware, we are in the very early stages of putting together the preliminary arrangements for the return visit of the Brethren of Spring Lodge to Scotland in March 2002. Whilst it is too early to publicise any of the details, rest assured when they are available, our readers will be amongst the first to know.

# MARK N' ARCHIE



J RENFREW SEPTEMBER 2021

*The Mallet is researched, edited & printed by :*

**Brother Jim Renfrew P.M.**

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" With grateful thanks to all those who gladly gave their assistance "

Lodge Website address : <http://unionandcrown307.com>